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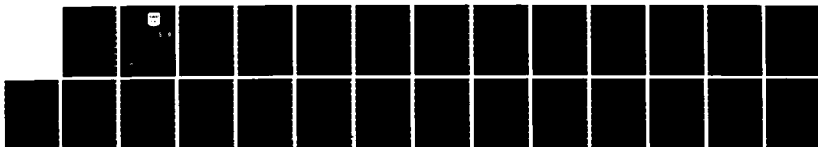
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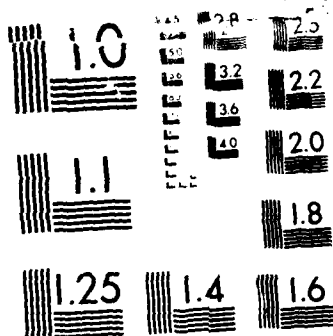
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STUDENT ESSAY

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REAR BATTLE AT CORPS LEVEL; ARE WE PREPARED?

BY

COLONEL DAVID L. CROCKER

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USAWC MILITARY STUDIES PROGRAM PAPER

REAR BATTLE AT CORPS LEVEL: ARE WE PREPARED?

An Individual Essay

by

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6 April 1986

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ABSTRACT

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Are combat service support units in a corps rear area prepared to neutralize or defeat the Soviet rear area threat? This essay examines two deficiencies with current rear battle doctrine and proposes alternatives. The deficiencies include the use of the Rear Area Operations Center (RAOC) and the combat service support units' lack of sufficient fire power and mobility for self defense. A critical assessment is made of the extensive Soviet threat to the corps rear area. The conclusion is presented that the Rear Battle doctrine is sound. However, combat service support units are in need of additional training and equipment to cope with the threat. Suggestions are given on additional ways to counter the threat.

THREAT

A great deal has been written concerning the Soviet threat to combat support and combat service support operations in the rear area. Indications are clear that both Soviet intentions and capabilities pose a serious threat to US forces conducting combat support and combat service support operations/functions in the corps rear area.

In the Soviet view, the ground forces are (in non-nuclear warfare) the instrument of decision, and the Soviet commander has a wide range of assets to assist the advance of his ground units. When these assets are fully employed, any force opposing the Soviet army will suddenly be faced with a threat to its rear areas. This threat has historical precedent.

Their idea of offensive as the basic form of combat action dates back to Soviet military experience during their civil war in 1917. The Soviets have, of course, refined their application of the offensive over the years as technology provided more effective means for implementation. One key refinement was the principle of simultaneous action upon the enemy to the entire depth of his employment and upon objectives in the deep rear. This means to attack the enemy violently and simultaneously throughout his depth, to carry the battle to the enemy rear with swift penetrations by maneuver units, fires, aviation, airborne and helicopterborne assaults, and by unconventional warfare means.

The Soviet doctrine is clearly defined and its credibility has been thoroughly established by years of refinement and experience in actual combat actions. The Soviet organizations available for operations in the corps rear area include maneuver units, airborne units, helicopterborne units, suppressive fires, aviation, and unconventional warfare means.

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Maneuver units are possibly the most dangerous threat to deployed conventional forces because of the high ratio of combat power involved. The employment of these units through selective penetrations of the FEBA has long been established in Soviet tactical doctrine. These units are known as forward detachments which take advantage of a gap in the enemy front, refuse engagement, and separate completely from the main body in order to penetrate deeply into the enemy rear.

A forward detachment consists of either a tank battalion or a motorized infantry battalion suitably reinforced with artillery, engineers, and a chemical reconnaissance squad. A motorized infantry battalion usually is assigned a tank company and additional antitank assets, but in all situations, the exact composition of the forward detachment is determined by the mission, the enemy situation, and the availability of friendly forces.

While these forward detachments can be dangerous in moving to an assigned objective, they are a specific threat to rear activities. The destruction or capture of enemy nuclear means and destruction of air defense means, control points, communication centers, and various rear area objectives are important missions for these forward detachments.

The Soviets now have over 50 years of experience with airborne operations, and they possess the world's largest airborne force (7 airborne divisions). The most important feature of these airborne divisions is that once on the ground, they are essentially light mechanized infantry divisions.

The Soviets categorize their airborne missions based on the depth and importance of the objective and the size of the force employed as being strategic, operational, tactical or special. I will discuss the last two-- the tactical and special missions.

Tactical missions are conducted by a reinforced airborne company or an airborne battalion and are controlled at the division level. Typical tactical missions for airborne forces include the destruction of enemy nuclear assets, command posts, logistics bases, communications sites, and airfields. They can also be tasked to seize and defend key terrain such as high ground, bridges, road junctions, and passes pending linkup with forward detachments.

Special missions are conducted by company or smaller-sized units, usually without their armored vehicles. These are classified as unconventional warfare (UW) missions and include acts of sabotage or reconnaissance in the depths of the enemy's defenses.

Once on the ground, Soviet airborne troops operate in much the same manner as motorized rifle troops. A much heavier emphasis is placed on reconnaissance and security since they seek to avoid a decisive engagement between the drop zone and the objective area. The raid is a commonly preferred tactic, and only rarely will an airborne attack unit be tasked to seize and defend an area unless an early linkup with regular ground forces is anticipated. They will march as quickly as possible to the objective, assault violently, and then withdraw to carry out another mission.

Airborne units are extremely valuable assets. Much time and expense has been spent on them, and the likelihood of their being committed to a mission with little chance of survival is remote. If a strong airborne force is dropped in the rear area where it proceeds to take an objective and then "digs in" and defends that area, the message is plain--it expects a linkup. It is time to watch for follow-on airborne forces in greater strength, or more likely, a determined attempt by a forward detachment of the regular ground forces to achieve this linkup.¹

The growth of a helicopterborne capability has gradually shifted the Soviet view on tactical airborne operations. They watched the American experience in Vietnam and by the late 1960's, they had expanded their helicopterborne forces. By the mid-1970's, at least two air assault brigades were established and there are now at least six of these units. These brigades consist of three rifle battalions with supporting units and number about 2,500 men each.

Soviet doctrine for the employment of helicopterborne forces state that they can be inserted anywhere throughout the tactical depth of the enemy's defenses, i.e., up to 50 kilometers. Soviet descriptions of these operations indicate that a more realistic depth of operations of this type is about 15 kilometers. Operations of this type are battalion-size or smaller; generally conducted in daylight; and linkup with advancing ground forces (forward detachments) within a few hours.

For the most part, the Soviet helicopterborne operations are usually intended for short-term actions. Ideally, the objective should be relatively small, easily accessible, and lightly defended. The scheme of maneuver is approved by higher command levels and while the helicopterborne force commander can "refine" this scheme, he must make as few changes as possible.

The missions of the helicopterborne forces may also include neutralization of enemy command, control and communications facilities, deception missions, the seizure of key terrain, establishment of blocking positions during pursuit operations, vertical envelopment of enemy positions, or the neutralization of enemy combat or combat service support elements. Helicopterborne units can also conduct reconnaissance missions in the enemy rear, and even lay mines or conduct ambushes on enemy reserves or supply convoys. As can be seen, the threat to rear areas posed by the Soviet helicopterborne operations is significant.²

Other aspects of the Soviet threat to rear areas are artillery and missile fires as well as Soviet aviation.

The BM-27 is a heavy multiple rocket launcher (MRL) that fires rockets to an extended range of 35,000 to 40,000 meters, which greatly exceeds the range capability of the more well-known BM-21 (20,500 meters). The types of ammunition available for the BM-27 include high-explosive fragmentation, chemical, and possibly scatterable mine warheads. The utility of a weapon system of this nature should be obvious. It can move close to the FEBA and reach to the depths of the rear areas with fires that greatly complicate support activities. Chemical fires would be bad enough, but what would be the effect on a major headquarters that suddenly found itself deluged with scatterable anti-personnel mines?

The SS-21 surface-to-surface missile is apparently replacing the FROG-7 tactical rocket in Soviet divisions. Like the FROG-7, the SS-21 has high explosive, chemical and nuclear warheads, but it is a guided missile and so is probably considerably more accurate. It also possesses a greater range--with a conservative estimate being 160 kilometers vice the older FROG-7's 70 kilometers. This will greatly complicate the task of locating these systems, but the task of destroying them is also made more difficult since they can fire from much further back under the air defense umbrella.

The 152 mm 2S5 is a self-propelled, turretless gun that is now apparently replacing the older M-46 130 mm gun. The 2S5 is thought to be capable of ranges in excess of 30 kilometers, so it not only outranges the system it is replacing, but it is competitive with the M-198 155 mm howitzer. This system is thought to be nuclear-capable and almost certainly has chemical munitions available.

The newest aviation threat to rear areas is the SU-25 Frogfoot, a ground attack aircraft similar to the American A-10 Thunderbolt, with

approximately the same capabilities. This aircraft is heavily armed and heavily armored, can absorb heavy ground fire, and since it is comparatively slow, can deliver its ordnance with great precision.

The Soviets are now capable of reaching much further into rear areas with heavier payloads than ever before.

The final aspect of the threat, unconventional warfare means, to rear areas is probably the least appreciated because it has been kept in secrecy for many years. During the Second World War, the Soviets were very successful in employing partisan or UW activities against the Germans. These UW activities may be committed against US forces in any geographic theater. The Soviets clearly recognize the value of UW operations in an enemy's rear areas. The troops of these units are called "Spetsnaz." They participated in the 1968 invasion of Czechoslovakia by capturing the Prague airport and arresting the Czech leadership. They also played an important role in the 1979 invasion of Afghanistan.

It is unlikely that Spetsnaz or other UW forces would be employed on a very large scale in corps rear areas, but even a relatively small number of teams could create serious problems. Of course, the potential for the employment of larger UW forces does exist. In either case, small teams operating clandestinely with the missions of reconnaissance, destruction of headquarters, command posts, and communications facilities, and sabotage of key logistics facilities pose a serious threat to rear areas that must not be ignored.³

The indications are clear. The Soviets have the capability and intend to use forces to disrupt combat service support operations throughout the corps rear area. Thus, failure to develop, resource and exercise rear battle doctrine could affect the outcome of any future conflict with the Soviet Union.

REAR BATTLE DOCTRINE

As a counter to this threat, Air Land Battle doctrine (FM 100-5, Operations) has been developed. It ties together the deep, close-in and rear battles. While the deep and close-in battle doctrine is well-developed and exercised, the rear battle doctrine is sound but in some cases in need of resourcing and exercising.

FM 90-14, Rear Battle, was published in July 1985. The basic philosophy of Rear Battle doctrine is to prevent interruptions to combat support and combat service support operations, whether such interruptions are caused by hostile action on rear area units, activities and installations. The doctrine also calls for the maximum use of organic combat support and combat service support resources to provide self-defense and mutual support without requiring the assistance of combat forces. If assistance from combat forces becomes necessary, a progressive integration of resources is implemented and continues until a point is reached where control is passed from the area commander within the corps rear area to a tactical commander as the threat increases.

The organization for rear battle includes elements which are permanently assigned rear battle responsibilities and those which are assigned rear battle responsibilities on an as-required basis. The elements assigned on an as-required basis are those combat support and combat service support units located within the corps rear area. The organizations with permanent responsibilities for rear battle are the Rear Area Operation Centers (RAOCs). All RAOCs in the US Army are in the Army National Guard.

The purpose of the RAOC is to keep the corps commander informed on the rear battle situation and the resources available within his area of responsibility. It provides the commander with a permanent planning capability and exercises command and control over the forces when they are committed.⁴

Corps rear area units are normally grouped into base and base clusters, each of which will have a commander designated by the corps support group commander. Corps support group commanders supervise the bases and base cluster. Independent or isolated bases also occur in the rear area and are integrated into support group plans. The design of bases and base clusters are developed in base defense plans. Ideally, these units remain together throughout the battle and develop rare battle related interdependence and cohesiveness.

The base is a geographically small, defensible area with a clearly defined perimeter and established access controls. The base commander is the unit commander or senior unit commander if more than one unit is present in the base. The base plans for its own defense against Level I activities (activities by agents, saboteurs, terrorists) and Level II activities (sabotage and reconnaissance missions by less than brigade-sized units) attacks. The base provides a base of fire against Level III activities (penetration by battalion-sized or larger ground, airmobile, amphibious operations) attacks. The base is the focal point for base defense planning and training. The base cluster is a much larger geographical area containing several bases with no definable perimeter and access control. The base cluster is the next higher command and control headquarters for the base. A battalion commander with an operational headquarters and staff is usually designated as the base cluster commander. The base cluster commander integrates base defense plans within the cluster, establishes communications with the bases and the support group, plans for insertion of maneuver forces in Level III activities, and plans for fire support of base defenses within the cluster. He is assisted in these endeavors by RACO forces and other combat support forces.

Base cluster configurations are developed at support group level, considering both mission and rear battle operations. Movement and dispersion is carefully balanced against loss of base and base cluster efficiency in self-defense. To maintain defensive cohesiveness, bases move in their entirety under the command of the base commander.

Bases are equipped to defend themselves against Level I and Level II attacks and to provide a base of fire against Level III attack pending reinforcement.

The formation of bases creates the need to integrate defenses, assign zones of responsibility and perimeter fields of fire. Base defense plans are rehearsed, and the highest feasible percentage of personnel are involved.⁵

Rear Battle doctrine also includes Host Nation Support. Host nation support includes civil and military assistance given in peace and war by a host nation to allied forces. For example, the US and the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) concluded a Host Nation Support Agreement in April 1982. Under the agreement, the FRG provides combat support and combat service support to the US Army. This support includes both military and civilian. The military support is provided by 93,000 FRG Reservists, i.e., 50,000 in units to support the US Army and 18,000 overhead for FRG command and control and logistical support. The military support includes areas such as transportation, collocated operating base support, ammunition, POL handling, facility security, medical evacuation and transition of selected labor service units into FRG Reservists.

In addition to the uniformed support being provided by the German Territorial Army, police and the Federal Border police, there will also be civilian host nation support available. Infrastructure, including such

areas as existing air and sea ports, the rail network, telephone system and the Central Europe Pipeline System, is reasonably available but difficult to quantify. There will also be additional support from the civilian sector. Approximately 30 percent of the US transportation requirement will be met with Host nation support. Actions are also on-going to insure the availability of the civilian work force of the US Forces and of the contractors supporting US forces. Actions are on-going in many other areas, e.g., materiel handling, fabric maintenance, radio and TV emergency schools, welding and food supplies.

The success of the rear battle depends on the binding together of the diverse Host nation support and all available US resources. There must be one responsible commander at a given time in a given area. Geographic areas of responsibility must be clearly defined and may change as the situation requires. Therefore, effective control of the rear battle operations requires a continuous, civil-military interface to achieve unity of effort.⁶

Overall, the rear battle doctrine is sound. However, there are some deficiencies in the current and emerging Rear Battle doctrine concerning the use of the corps Military Police (MP) brigade and the RAOCs.

In order to establish a basis for examination of the use of the RAOCs and the corps MP brigade and the scope of their responsibilities, it is important to understand the characteristics of a corps rear area. A good example of a realistic corps rear area is the V Corps deployed in the Central Army Group (CENTAG) region of NATO.

The rear area for this three-division corps is approximately 130 kilometers wide by 120 kilometers deep, or a total area of approximately 15,600 square kilometers. The southern half of the Corps rear area includes the Frankfurt metropolitan area. This includes the cities of Hanau and

Wiesbaden. The area is heavily populated and is a major communications center for air, land, rail and river traffic. From a military standpoint, the metropolitan complex is located next to a major avenue of approach to crossings over the Rhine River. This avenue of approach is a relatively low, rolling area running north to south through the Corps area. A major portion of the favorable terrain in this avenue of approach is within the Corps rear area. As such, it should be considered a probable enemy objective for the rear battle forces.⁷

The northern half of the Corps rear area is predominately rural and has a lower population density. This area provides avenues of approach to crossings over the Rhine River, with several intermediate airfields which, if captured by the enemy, would support air operation to airland a motorized rifle division within a short time frame.

The road network is well developed throughout the Corps rear area. Rivers and streams generally flow east to west and, except for the Main and the Rhine, the rivers are fordable.

The civilian populace is friendly and well-organized with police and paramilitary organizations trained in emergency procedures. However, enemy agents and organized partisan groups can be expected to become active at the initiation of hostilities. These groups may conduct offensive guerrilla operations against civil and military facilities, provide intelligence and control elements for enemy operations and other activities of a covert or overt nature. Civilian police and paramilitary organizations have a limited combat capability. These organizations operate extensive civilian intelligence nets and will capture or neutralize known and suspected enemy agents. These organizations will assist in the evacuation and relocation of civilians from critical forward areas and assist with traffic control.⁸

COUNTERING THE THREAT

As can be seen, security of a corps rear area is a major undertaking. The Corps MP brigade provides function-oriented support to the Corps. The general functional areas include tactical and physical security, route and area reconnaissance, circulation control, enemy prisoner of war, crime prevention, enforcement, criminal investigation, confinement of military prisoners, and rear area protection.

The Corps MP brigade has a function-oriented mission throughout the Corps area that parallels the requirements for the rear battle. It possesses a limited capability for total security of LOC's. Its ability to provide convoy security is restricted to shallow flank security and road-bound combat vehicles traveling with the convoy. This limitation alone restricts its ability to maneuver and mass combat power against enemy attacks, conventional or unconventional. The lack of emphasis on MP training in fundamentals of tactical operations raises serious doubt as to the effectiveness of MP units employed in combat operations. The firepower capability of the brigade is unacceptably limited in view of the threat. The extensive and integrated communications of the brigade provides an effective means of command and control and surveillance of the Corps rear area. This enhances the intelligence effort, the MP missions in the Corps rear area, and the close cooperation maintained with civilian policy and the local populace provide an intelligence capability unmatched by other units.

Command and control of MP units is centralized at the theater MP level and at each subordinate major command level. MP representatives are assigned coordinating staff sections at each level to assist in MP task planning. At the operational level, the execution of area support missions is the responsibility of MP company commanders. This concept of centralized

planning, coordination and technical supervision and decentralized execution provides an exceptionally well-organized command and control structure within which to command and control rear battle operations.

The Corps MP brigade has an enormous responsibility. As currently equipped, MP battalions and MP companies are not able to effectively contain and neutralize the anticipated rear threat without some changes. They must be able to react quickly and to assist the Corps unit during Level II and Level III activities. The primary areas of uncertainty center around the present tactical mobility and firepower of the MP units when compared to the threat that must be defeated.

Firepower can be significantly improved by placing a grenade launcher, such as the already typed-classified MK-19, 40 mm automatic grenade launcher, in MP companies. This weapon system has the advantage of being mounted on the M-151 and is also effectively employed when mounted on a tripod ground mount.

Deployment of a suitable High Mobility Weapons Carrier (HMWC) should be accomplished as soon as possible. This vehicle will provide the required tactical mobility and agility to accomplish the RAOC execution mission. Another advantage with this vehicle is its capability to mount a heavy machine gun.⁹

Another deficiency of the current rear battle doctrine is with the philosophy concerned with the organization, training and development of RAOCs and the associated combat support and combat service support units. All RAOCs are assigned to the Army National Guard (ARNG), which is organized predominantly into combat units. The combat support and combat service support units are either in the active Army or in the Army Reserve (USAR). This separation creates problems in training and in deployment.

From the standpoint of training, there is little or no opportunity for RAOCs assigned to the ARNG units to train with combat support/combat service support units. Certainly there is little opportunity for combat support/combat service support units in Europe to train with the task force command section of the RAOC which will command and control them in combat. Active Army training for rear battle is almost nonexistent. Furthermore, it seems improbable that the mission requirements for support units in the early stages of deployment would allow the personnel and equipment resources of the combat support and combat service support units to be diverted for rear battle training. While some progress has been made in forward deploying small planning cells in Europe and moving the RAOCs up on the Time Phased Force Deployment List (TPFDL), their task is far too big for small planning cells and the corps is without the majority of its Rear Battle command and control element. In view of the threat capability, this is a serious weakness in Rear Battle doctrine.¹⁰

What are other deficiencies in the Rear Battle doctrine and what can be done to correct them? Some believe that the deficiencies are minor and sufficient forces are available. All that is needed is better planning, coordination and exercising. For example, a full-strength US Corps may have well over 30,000 combat service support troops in the corps rear. This is a formidable number of fighting soldiers. With proper command and control, communications, tactics, and weapons, these forces can defend themselves against sizeable enemy units and at the same time keep up logistics support. They must become accustomed to this kind of situation in individual and collective training in order to hold their own when necessary--maybe without much help from maneuver units.¹¹

How, then, do we counter the threat to rear areas? The solution lies in understanding the threat and the Rear Battle doctrine, in resourcing

the rear battle units, in combined operations and in mindset and in careful and detailed training.

Greater emphasis must be placed at all levels on establishing the base defense system. Sepcifically, an integrated detection system must be established. Detection efforts should include troop observations, viewers, emplaced sensors, and illumination devices. The Platoon Early Warning System (PEWS) should be utilized as an anti-intrusion detection system, and issued in sufficient quantities to provide adquate coverage of the base area.

Warning systems and procedures must be established to disseminate notice of enemy attack. Alarms could be sounded by using such devices as sirens, pyrotechnics, and klaxons.

The defense system should also hinder the enemy's progress after detection and warning to permit base defense forces to react. Delay could be accomplished by employing mines, boobytraps, wire, flame and riot control agents. These measures are also designed to canalize the enemy into kill zones through the use of claymore M18A1 anti-personnel mines. Of course, the responsible commander must ensure that the proposed field is coordinated with adjacent, higher, and subordinate units.

Effective control procedures must be established. Individuals entering a base should be subjected to control procedures. A means of identification should be established at specific entry and exit points. Personnel and crew-served weapons should be provided as back-up at each point of entry or exit.

All soldiers must be aware of the rear threat that exists at all three levels, including the required active and passive individual actions that should be taken. Each soldier must know what is required of him should the

unit find itself at any threat level so that when he must act, he will not hesitate to carry out the appropriate countermeasures.¹²

I firmly believe in the philosophy that while combat service support personnel are soldiers and technicians at the same time, they are soldiers first and should be technicians second to none. Unfortunately, we do not embrace this philosophy throughout the Army--but we should. Combat service support soldiers who are not properly trained in selected soldier skills or just common task skills will not survive to employ their technical skills.

Combat service support soldiers need to know how to analyze terrain. They need to be able to get into the "enemy's mind" and ask the question, "How would I attack this position or unit?" Combat service support soldiers need to know how to select primary and alternate fighting positions and, most importantly, how to construct proper fighting positions with overhead cover, grenade sump, range card and firing stakes. These training tasks may be considered as rather basic--and they are--but most combat force support soldiers do not practice these tasks or practice them correctly because they do not know how.

To defeat the Soviets in the rear area, we also need to train our combat, combat support and combat service support soldiers to fight as an integrated team. Unfortunately, we face other "mindsets" when trying to exercise our units. We do not train as a synchronized force.¹³

Probably the most important thing we can do is to plan tactics and logistics concurrently. This will identify tactical plans that cannot be supported logistically as well as the risks. It forces tacticians and logisticians, making the most efficient use of our combat, combat support and combat service support units. Unity of effort is one of our goals during war and it should be practiced while we train. This principle applies in the

classroom as well as on the field. We need more cross-training in our service schools. Combat arms schools need to place greater emphasis on the transportation, maintenance and overall logistics and the effect they have on tactics and tactical plans. Combat service support schools need more hands-on tactical training. If we do not train as integrated warriors, we might not win.¹⁴

Good progress is being made at the Quartermaster, Ordnance, and Transportation Officer Basic Courses. A 30-hour common-core curriculum along with a 7-day field exercise on infantry-type training is being conducted. Specifically, training is given in the following areas: Rear Battle operations, tactical communications, Command Post operations, survival/evasion, defense planning, land navigation, terrain association/analysis, artillery fire--call for and adjust, tactical intelligence, patrolling, and range operations to include the firing of the M16, M60, M203 and 45 caliber pistol.

Training is important, but soldiers must also be given the tools with which to fight. More light antitank weapons (LAWs) and machine guns are needed. However, this is not enough. Heavy weapons are required against either BMP, BMD, a dismounted attack, or even tanks. Headquarters personnel are routinely assigned to man machine guns, why not assign rear area personnel to man heavier weapons on an additional duty basis. The last thing, though, the combat service support troops need is to get involved in a lengthy, expensive developmental process aimed at producing a rear area defense weapon. Appropriate weapons already exist. Such weapons as the M60 machine gun and the M2 50-caliber machine gun, the 25 mm Bushmaster Chain gun, the MK 19-3 40 mm grenade launcher, the medium antitank weapon (MAW) and the light antitank weapon (LAW) are available.

More important, a year-round weapons training program should be established so that the techniques learned could be utilized during field exercises.

Hopefully, these techniques would become second-nature to the soldiers during combat and would help them to survive.

This training could be conducted during thirty-minute breaks in a maintenance shop and should tie-in training on fighting positions, overhead cover, call-for fire, etc., as previously mentioned. Combat service support soldiers will fight the way they are trained. It is our responsibility as leaders to ensure that our soldiers are given the opportunity to learn how to fight and to be prepared for the rear battle.

Are we prepared? I am not sure.

SUMMARY

In summary, in any future conflict against a major threat force, the rear area combat environment is characterized by intense threat activity throughout the corps rear area. The design of such activity is to spread panic and disrupt the corps rear area. Among the objectives of the threat forces operating against the corps rear area is the destruction of headquarters and logistic installations and nuclear storage sites, disorganization of rear area communication and disablement of airfields and air warning and defense systems; neutralization of high-ranking political and military individuals; seizure of important terrain features such as lines of communication junctures, key bridges and harassment of supply and movement along lines of communication.

Threat forces employed to accomplish such objectives range from single saboteurs to regimental-size airborne or battalion-size airmobile forces. The recently published Rear Battle Doctrine is sound and places great emphasis on unit self-help and aggressive defense. MP and RAOC forces are limited, especially in the early phases of a general conflict. Combat service support units must train better and be prepared to defend themselves from the enemy

action and destroy the enemy as expeditiously as possible so that they may return to their support activities. The improved mobility and upgunning of military units is vital to base defense.

All rear battle operations must be a combined effort involving all elements within the corps rear area. Careful and detailed integrated planning and coordination, tested during extensive rear battle training, are essential for success against any contingency.¹⁵

ENDNOTES

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